

VZCZCXRO2761
OO RUEHDBU
DE RUEHMO #5030 1321305
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 121305Z MAY 06
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5697
INFO RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE IMMEDIATE 0183
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 4026
RUEHTA/AMEMBASSY ALMATY PRIORITY 0546
RUEHNT/AMEMBASSY TASHKENT PRIORITY 4853
RUEHEK/AMEMBASSY BISHKEK PRIORITY 2506
RUEHAH/AMEMBASSY ASHGABAT PRIORITY 2008

C O N F I D E N T I A L MOSCOW 005030

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/12/2016
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SNAR](#) [RS](#)
SUBJECT: MOSCOW OPPOSES CENTRAL AND SOUTH ASIAN
COUNTER-NARCOTICS AND SECURITY CONFERENCE

REF: STATE 76665

Classified By: Minister-Counselor for Political Affairs Kirk Augustine.
Reasons: 1.4 (b/d).

¶1. (C) Poloff discussed reftel demarche points May 12 with Anatoliy Taksabayev, Deputy Director of the MFA Third CIS (Central Asia) Department. (NOTE: We were unable to make this demarche to the MFA New Threats and Challenges Department, as the Deputy Director and principal staffers responsible for counternarcotics were traveling.) Taksabayev said he was familiar with the conference planned for May 15-17 in Dushanbe, and it had already been decided Russia would not participate. He understood that other invited countries were making their own decisions about participation, and many might participate "at one level or another."

¶2. (C) Asked why Moscow was opposed to the initiative, Taksabayev said the GOR believed the Central and South Asian Counter-Narcotics and Security working group was duplicative of other regional mechanisms to combat narcotics trafficking, and the GOR saw no purpose in it. He agreed that Russia, the countries of the region, and the United States all shared a common interest in fighting narcotics trafficking and said he would welcome further discussion on common approaches.

¶3. (C) COMMENT. Moscow has, as reftel notes, expressed to us on many occasions and in many contexts its interest in jointly fighting narcotics trafficking in Central Asia. We suspect that its apparent hostility to the Dushanbe conference is connected to suspicions -- also expressed many times to us over the past year -- that the United States is intent on creating a regional organization designed to compete with the organizations Moscow prefers (SCO, CSTO, and others). The involvement in the Dushanbe conference of the Marshall Center, where in the GOR view a former U.S. Ambassador to Kyrgyzstan allegedly detailed a USG plan to create a Central Asian organization to address regional issues, from which Russia would be excluded, may have affected Russian attitudes. Short of offering Russian government involvement in future working group planning or finding other ways of increasing transparency and thus easing Russian suspicion, we expect the GOR will continue to oppose initiatives under these auspices.
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